



Hot Ice for Sale

by Jack Karney

Illustrated by JACK KEAY

THE streets were noisy, and dirty as a garbage dump. The dusk shadows filled every nook and corner of the tenement-house and retail-store doorways. In this neighborhood the ragged kids didn't ask for pennies—they wanted cigarettes. Things had changed since my time. Then we asked nobody for anything. When we wanted something we went out and got it—how, did not matter much.

Surprisingly, most of the gang grew up to become solid citizens. Even Barney Malin, our leader, who now ran a book, commanded respect from the neighbors and cops. Me, I had to get hooked up with the Bender's Insurance Company—Jim Breen, the only red-headed investigator in the firm.

It was Barney Malin's apartment I was headed for. I wanted to ask him about a little job of robbery. I had a good proposition for Barney. Thirty thousand dollars cash for the eighty grand in jewelry taken by the heister. It was more than he could get from a fence, and with Bender's Insurance it would be cash on the line, no questions asked.

You couldn't blame Bender's too much for playing ball with a guy who was on the other side of the fence. We could pay thirty thousand and still stay in business, or we could get tough. If we lost out on the (Continued on page 64)



**She was as lovely as any of the stolen jewels, and twice
as hard. She had big plans — which included me dead.**

**JACK
KEAY**



Hot Ice For Sale

(Continued from page 47)

deal, the eighty grand insurance would just about bankrupt us.

I would have preferred to go all out, gamble on getting the jewelry and saving thirty thousand dollars. But I wasn't running Bender's.

The heist had taken place at two that afternoon. At three it was reported to Bender's. At four I was in the station house getting a list of the stuff taken and a description of the bandit. It was seven-thirty when I arrived at Barney Malin's apartment, a four-room layout in a twelve-story modern building in the heart of the slums.

The girl who opened the door was a pretty little thing, large dark eyes in a tiny face warm with color. I handed her my card. "I'm Jim Breen. Barney and I used to swim off the same dock."

She was cute. "Will Barney recognize you without tights?"

"We couldn't afford tights in those days. Do I see Barney or do we discuss clothes?"

Her eyes shifted from the card, came up to mine, slanted off. "Barney isn't here right now. If you'll leave a message . . ."

The late afternoon edition of the *Telly* was open on the couch. I sat down, saw the big black headline, read on. Mrs. Thomas Donahue, wife of the president of Donahue Textiles, had opened the door of her duplex apartment, and a masked man packing a shiny revolver had come in, tied up the maid and Mrs. Donahue and fled with a boxful of jewelry. Mrs. Donahue had managed to knock over the telephone, squirm around to where she could dial 'Operator,' and in split minutes the cops had come in to undo the sailor knots.

"You can take the paper with you, if you would like," she said softly. "I'm through with it."

I chewed on a fresh cigar. "Maybe Barney'd like to read it. Quite a description they got of the man who got the Donahue ice. A big man with brown hair and brown eyes and a mole on his left breast. He's got big hands, a tattoo of a heart on his left wrist and he was in the Navy."

Her eyes opened wide, dark eyes full of fear. "Quite an imagination. There's no such description in the paper."

"It was a sailor who made those knots, and the cops told me about that tattoo. The maid saw it. The rest I could fill in myself. I figured I'd got to Barney before the cops do. Barney and I can do business."

"Business? What sort of business? You know I haven't the faintest idea what you're talking about." I might have believed that, but her eyes were too bright, her nostrils quivering.

I got up. "No use wasting your time with a long-winded explanation." I moved toward the foyer. "Barney would understand. Where's his bedroom?"

She moved quickly, blocked my way. "You can't go in there, not without a warrant or something. If you'll tell me what it's all about, it might be interesting enough for me to discuss with Barney."

Her small talk was getting under my skin. Or maybe it was the pretty face.

I said, "You wouldn't be Barney's wife?"

She displayed a pouting smile. "Do I have to answer that? Barney and I are good friends. You know, it's a good thing I'm not very sensitive. I'll tell him you were here."

I took her arms, gently moved her to one side. Like a cat she whirled and pounced on me. I had my hands full for a minute. She'd looked soft, feminine. Actually she could have been a female wrestler. I had her pinned between me and the wall when a sleepy voice wanted to know what this was all about. I moved away from her.

"Hello, Barney."

He came in from the bedroom and recognized me. "Breen! Jim Breen!" He turned on her. "Fanny, is this any way to treat my friends? How many times—"

"Watch your blood pressure," she said, rubbing her left shoulder where I'd probably hurt her. "You've got so many friends, you should keep a file—pictures and fingerprints so I can recognize them."

"What brings you here, Jim?" he asked me.

I PICKED up the paper from the couch, looked at the headlines, dropped the paper onto the table, moved my eyes up to his. His glance was quiet, level. He lit a cigarette, growled deep in his throat.

"Stop being so damn mysterious, Jim."

I chewed on my cigar. "Bender's Insurance is stuck for the insurance on the Donahue swag. Eighty grand. Maybe you could get twenty, maybe twenty-five thousand. We'll pay thirty."

"Why pick on me?"

"The cops tell me the heister had a tattoo on his left wrist, a heart with an arrow running through it."

A flicker of uneasiness passed over his face. "Lots of guys have tattoos, hearts with arrows. I got a good bookie business, Jim, making a good dollar. I'm no heister."

I dropped my cigar in the ash tray.

Maybe I was batting my head against a wall.

"If I did the job," he said, "you think I wouldn't do business with you? Thirty grand is nice money. What the hell could I lose? You'd never turn me in and I'd have the rocks off my hands."

"You know people, Barney. Maybe you could find out who did the job. I'm paying thirty grand and I don't care who turns in the stuff."

"If I hear anything I'll let you know," he said heartily. He walked me to the door. "Jim."

"Yes, Barney?"

"What else did the cops say?" He had an oddly fixed look about his eyes. He was worried.

I said, "Nothing, Barney, not a damn thing. Only you and I know who could make pretty sailor knots and also sports a fancy tattoo on his wrist."

He yanked open the door. "So long, Jim. Drop around sometime when you're not working. Fanny and I'll take you out for a good time."

Fanny cried, "Leave me out of this," just as the door closed behind me.

ON MY second knock the door opened on a chain and a pair of black, restless eyes looked out at me. She was the Donahue's maid, still scared from her afternoon experience. I handed her my card through the opening. She glanced at it, shook her head. Madame wasn't home.

"I've got a couple questions I'd like to ask you."

"Yes?"

"It's a little hard trying to hold a conversation out in the hallway. Couldn't I come in and wait for Mrs. Donahue?"

I talked a little more and, like she was signing her death warrant, she sighed, closed the door, unhooked the chain and re-opened the door to let me in.

It was a nice apartment, furnished simply but with plenty taste. Even I could tell that. I got out a fresh cigar, lit up.

I said to the maid, standing still and stiff in her white uniform, "I know you gave the police a description of the man who robbed Mrs. Donahue, but perhaps you've remembered something you forgot to tell?"

She went over the details again. Considering the man had been masked, the description was fair. When he'd bent to bind her legs his jacket sleeve had slipped up and she'd seen the tattoo. After leaving her and Mrs. Donahue on their backs in the living-room foyer, he'd gone directly to the bedroom. Through the open door, they'd watched him open the dresser drawer and take the box of jewels.

The cigar went dead. I laid it in the ash tray, went looking in my pockets for a match just as the hall door opened.

"Marie?" a soft, cool voice said from around the foyer bend.

The maid excused herself.

I went and looked out the window.

"Do you like our view, Mr. Breen?"

She had a high, smooth forehead, an upturned nose between the clear gray eyes. The lines of her jaw sloped smoothly down to the softly rounded chin. She was probably around forty, but could have dropped ten years and nobody'd argue the point.

She held my card in her hand and, even as I answered, "Yes, it is a nice view," the maid said goodnight and went out.

Mrs. Donahue said, "It's Marie's night out." She joined me at the window. She smelled good. "You know, it's amazing how quickly you people get on the job."

"We try to be prompt." I took out a paper from my inside pocket. "Mrs. Donahue, would you mind checking this list of stolen items you reported to the police? Just in case those cops made a mistake. I'd like Mr. Donahue to check but I understand he's been in Los Angeles these last three months."

"Mr. Donahue is back. He called me from the airport. As soon as he clears up some business at his office he'll be home."

"Then he doesn't know?"

Her face was taut, sharp. "He'll learn the details soon enough. Poor Tom." A warm smile played around her lips. "It will take me at least an hour to convince him I wasn't physically harmed in any way. You know how some men are."

SHE got her handbag, opened it on the end table, took out a pair of glasses, put them on, and began to read the list. I studied the view outside. The river looked like crinkled cellophane in the moonlight.

Turning, I saw her pick up the cigar, stare at it like she had a serpent in her hand, look around for a place to throw it. I opened my lips to tell her I'd take it off her hands when she dropped it into her bag.

She said in a voice suddenly tight and thin, "It's correct, Mr. Breen," and handed me the list.

"Just a few questions . . ."

"Tomorrow, Mr. Breen." Her face was tense and pale. "I have a terrible headache."

"It won't take long. How long has your maid been with you?"

"Marie? Seven years. Surely you don't think Marie had anything to do with this?"

I shrugged. "Somebody tipped off the robber as to where you keep the jewels. The stickup man, according to your maid, tied you both securely, then immediately went to the bedroom, to the exact place you kept the jewel box. It's twenty-to-one somebody briefed him."

A tiny sound came out of her mouth. "I never thought of that."

"How many people knew where you kept your trinkets?"

"Marie, Mr. Donahue and I."

"With your husband in California, and you vouching for your maid's honesty, that leaves you."

She ran her long fingers over her face in a tired gesture. "I'm afraid I'm

not in the mood to appreciate your humor tonight."

I fingered a cigar in my pocket, left it there. "Every case we get, Mrs. Donahue, we figure on the phony angles. People report robberies that never came off. People jack up their claims—lose ten thousand dollars' worth of stuff and report ten times that. People dream up other ways of cheating the insurance companies. I'm convinced there was a robbery in this house. I'm also convinced that the man who did the job had some excellent coaching. You could have given him that coaching, or your maid, or your husband—even from California. Or it could have been somebody else who knew the layout of this place."

She stared at me for a long minute, then said, "I'm sorry, Mr. Breen. Right now, I can't think of anyone else."

"Think hard. A good friend of the family's, perhaps? Somebody who's been visiting you occasionally or frequently in the last three months?"

She drew her mouth down tightly. "Please go. Your imagination has run away with you. Goodnight, Mr. Breen."

"If that's how you want it. Before I go, could I have my cigar?"

"Cigar?" She appeared puzzled.

"The one you put in your handbag."

The red flush arose on her face.

"Mrs. Donahue, who's your cigar-smoking friend?" I asked. "You saw my cigar, thought he'd come in while you were out and left it on the tray. You got scared, maybe because I might ask what a cigar was doing in your tray when your husband was in California. Or maybe you were afraid your husband might come home, look at the cigar, and know that his wife had had a certain party for company."

She suddenly found her voice. "Get

out!" she cried. "My private life is my own. It has nothing to do with this robbery. Get out, damn you, get out!"

I went downstairs and parked myself across the street in the shadow of an apartment hotel. I smoked a couple of cigars before it was midnight and a cab rolled up to the door and Marie, the maid, got out.

I crossed the street and said hello. She backed away.

"It's me, Marie," I said, staying put. "Jim Breen."

She didn't object when I took her arm and steered her around the block. Within five minutes I had the name of Mrs. D's cigar-smoking boy friend.

Marie, in tears, said, "Please, Mr. Breen, you won't tell Mrs. Donahue."

I ASSURED her Mrs. Donahue need not know where I got the information, and headed for West End and Mr. Frank Sanders. I couldn't wait for daylight. By that time the jewels might be in the hands of a fence.

The street seemed quiet, deserted. A police radio car was parked on the corner and, as I reached Sanders' building, a brownstone house flanked by two apartment houses, a cop came down the steps, yanked open the radio-car door and slipped behind the wheel.

I went up the steps into the hallway. A man stood at the foot of the stairs talking to a woman. They both turned as they heard me, looked me over like I was a freak from Mars.

I said, "I'm looking for Mr. Frank Sanders."

The woman gasped, crossed herself. The man looked interested.

"One flight up," he said. "First door on your right."

I thanked him, went upstairs. He followed. Of course, by that time I knew.



"You keep warm your way and I'll keep warm my way!"

Six heads came around when I pushed open the door, six pairs of eyes, cold and calculating. I spied Tom Seger of the homicide squad.

"Hello, Breen," he said. "What's up?"

"Frank Sanders. I wanted to talk with him. We got a tip he was mixed up with a couple jewelry holdups."

His eyes narrowed. "The Donahue job, for instance?"

"Could be. I was going to ask him about it. Am I too late?"

He nodded. "Somebody tried to carve out his insides. He's dead. Six, seven hours. This tip—was it anonymous?"

"You know how those things are."

He blew air into his fist. "If I had anything to say, I'd drive every insurance company that did business with crooks out of business. You guys aren't helping yourself or us by buying back hot jewelry. For the crooks it's a pleasure. All they do is grab a mittful and contact you. They get cold cash, no questions. No headaches—nothing."

I said, "I wouldn't know about that, Tom."

"Like hell, you don't," he snorted. "You got a call from Sanders to come down and talk business. Only somebody beat you to it. Somebody got the stuff and left a knife in Sanders' belly. There isn't a diamond in the place."

"You said Sanders is dead six or seven hours. If he called me, do you think I'd wait that long to come down here? Use your head, Tom. Somebody called me and put the finger on Sanders. Nothing definite, just an idea."

SEGER's eyes moved down to my tie. "What else did that somebody tell you? Look, Breen, we know Sanders didn't do that stick-up job. The description is of a guy twice Sanders size. Maybe Sanders acted as a go-between for the heister and the fence, or as a fingerman."

There was nothing I could tell him without practically ruining my chance to get the stolen jewelry. Tip off Seger, and Barney'd never open up—not with a murder rap staring him in the face. Barney did the stickup. It had to be Barney. That's what I kept telling myself. If I was wrong, Bender's would go out of business.

When Seger got tired of my answers he chased me. I promised I'd help him with the case if I learned anything. Before I left, I asked him how they'd learned of Sanders' murder.

"A dame called and told us where we could find a body," he said sadly. "Kind of bashful. Hung up before we could get her name."

Fanny didn't look too surprised to see me, even if it was two in the morning. She moved to the end table, got a cigarette. Alongside the pack lay a pipe.

"Don't you sleep?" she said. Even at two a.m. she looked good.

"I'll sleep plenty when this case is finished. You and I'll have a long talk about that when I get some extra time. Right now, I'd like to talk to Barney. And don't tell me he isn't here."

"All right, I won't," she said.

A head came out of the bathroom

doorway. The hair was mussed, the face covered by a coat of lather.

"Hello," Barney said, "this is a helluva time to come calling."

I lit a cigar, went to the bathroom door, watched Barney tighten his safety razor. His eyes met mine in the mirror.

"Bet I know what you're thinking," he said.

"I wouldn't be surprised."

"You wonder what kind of a schmo shaves at this hour. I like to look good when I'm sleeping. Never can tell who I'll meet in my dreams."

"Let's stop horsing around, Barney. This afternoon—or yesterday afternoon—I offered you thirty grand for the Donahue jewelry—it still stands."

He worked the razor blade over his face, studied his work in the mirror.

I said, "In exactly two minutes, I'll withdraw the offer. After that, I'm out to get the ice and the guy who did the heist—free, gratis, not a dime."

He moved the tip of his nose with his left thumb and forefinger, ran the razor down the upper lip in quick strokes until the lather was gone.

"Jim," he said finally, "I didn't have the stuff this afternoon. I still don't."

I looked over my shoulder. Fanny was sitting in a chair, flipping the pages of a magazine she had in her lap. I lowered my voice. Maybe he didn't like to talk while she was around.

"After the job, you unloaded the stuff," I said hopefully. "Your partner took them off your hands. Then you got my offer. You induced your partner to give you the stuff for a quick sale to Bender's."

He splashed water over his face, growled. "Jim, you're a stubborn guy. You got your mind set on sticking a jewelry job on me, a respectable bookie, and you won't change it."

I said, "I learned on reliable authority your book got clipped last week."

"So I got clipped. It ain't the first time. Next week I'll make it back." He flung the towel onto the hamper.

I followed him into the living room. "By next week, Barney, you'll be in the clink. For murder. For knocking off a guy called Frank Sanders."

HIS face muscles worked like he was chewing gum. "Frank Sanders?" He laughed harshly. "I knew a Sanders who washed dishes in the Automat, only his name was Toots."

"Your act stinks. The cops are looking for the guy who heisted the Donahue stuff. They figure it's the same guy who killed Sanders. The cops don't know where to look. Unless I blow the whistle."

Beads of sweat jumped out along his forehead. He swore harshly, savagely. "I never killed Sanders or anybody else," he said. "And you're not going to frame me with a cockeyed story."

I glanced sideways. Fanny stared up at Barney. Her face was white with desperation.

I slipped my hand into my side pocket. "All right, Barney, get your things on. We're going to the police."

"Why? Why you making me trouble?"

Fanny's hand lay on the end table. I

turned away. "Why waste time, Barney?"

Something hard pressed up against my spine and a cool voice said, "Stay put or I'll blow you in half." In the movies a moll never said it tougher. "Get your things, Barney, and we'll get out of here." Barney scratched his chin, uncertainty in his manner. "Unless you want this phony cop to take you down to headquarters," she added.

Barney shook his head frantically. "No. Hold him here while I dress."

He raced into the bedroom. It was quiet in the room—like a boiler factory when the motors stop running.

"You're a good kid," I said over my shoulder. "If this turns out like I figure I'll buy you something pretty."

"You know, mister, you got the craziest line of gab. Wait'll I get your gun." Her hand slipped into my pocket, came out empty. She said indignantly, "You've got no gun!"

"Surprise!"

BARNEY came out of the bedroom, dressed, a traveling bag in one hand, a woman's fur-collared coat in the other. He flung her the coat. "We'll have to get out of town for a while. We—"

He stopped talking when I moved toward him. Fanny yelled something about shooting me. I told her it was her turn to yell surprise. She had no gun either—unless that pipe which had been on the end table could shoot.

Barney cried out as I grabbed his wrist, twisted. He went clear across the room, slammed against the wall. I picked up the valise, opened it, went through it quickly, then again slower, and then dropped it on the floor.

"Come here, Barney. I'm gonna frisk you," I said.

"Keep your hands off me."

He wasn't completely out when I searched him. Maybe my knuckles were getting soft in my old age. Twice I searched him, found nothing.

I'd played it so that Barney would grab the jewels out of their hiding place before he made a run for it. That made sense. But there were no jewels, no nothing. That made no sense.

Either Barney had the jewelry hidden some place else or he had nothing but a lump on his jaw.

I went home to bed, tossing and turning. It was around six-thirty when realization hit me. Not only didn't Barney have any jewelry but he hadn't heisted any in the first place.

I jumped out of bed, opened the classified telephone directory to "Pawnshops." I dialed the first name on the list before I realized that they weren't open at seven in the morning. After breakfast I got busy on the telephone. About seventy-five pawnshops were listed and I called more than half before I hit pay dirt. A place on Thirty-third Street had a brooch which fitted the description of the brooch stolen in the stickup.

When I'd called every pawnshop listed, I had the names of six who might have part of the Donahue loot. I hopped into my car and visited each. In the fourth on my list I almost

knocked over two plainclothesmen from the robbery squad. I had seen enough in the first three to satisfy me. At the moment I wasn't interested in getting the jewels back. For all I cared they could rot in the pawnshops where Frank Sanders had hocked them.

I got in my car and headed for the airport to check last night's flight list and the passage of Mr. Thomas Donahue. I learned he had stepped off the plane at exactly six-ten p.m.

Fanny wasn't glad to see me, not this time. In fact, she tried to slam the door in my face. My shoe stopped it and I pushed inside. Two traveling bags stood packed near the table.

I sat down, pushed my hat back. She stood there, glaring.

I said, "Sit down and make yourself at home, honey. We're waiting for Barney. I want to talk with him."

"Why don't you leave him alone?" Anger burned in her eyes. "He didn't do anything. All you do is hound him."

I kicked a bag with the side of my foot. "How far you and Barney going?"

"Far enough to get away from the smell of cops."

I caught her eye, held it. "Maybe you are, but I got different plans for

Barney. Where can I find him?"

She stopped biting her lower lip long enough to answer. "I don't know. He called, said I was to meet him on the corner at two o'clock."

"When you opened the door for me you had such a happy look on your face until you saw who it was."

She threw her head like a horse at the post—a beautiful horse.

"I was a lot happier before you came barging in here yesterday." She glanced nervously at the telephone.

I watched her face. "Barney went to get some money. Then he'll call you."

She turned her head, but I'd caught the bare flicker of surprise that passed over her face. I jumped up, grabbed her arms, turned her around. My voice was so harsh I didn't know it. "Isn't that the deal?"

"You're hurting me."

"Damn it, answer me. If Barney went where I think he did, he's flirting with a slab in the morgue."

She looked frightened. "He didn't tell me where he was going. Just that we needed some cash."

I pushed her away and hurried out.

A tall man with graying hair opened the door of the Donahue apartment.

He appeared to be tired, haggard.

"Mr. Donahue?"

"Yes, I'm Mr. Donahue."

I introduced myself and he abruptly opened the door wide. "Come in, Mr. Breen. We—we've had a little trouble."

I saw the big feet sticking out from behind the couch in the center of the room. Size twelve shoes. Barney Malin's shoes. I caught a glimpse of Mrs. Donahue, her face gray, sitting in her chair as I kneeled over Barney.

There was nothing I could do for him. I picked up the pearl-handled revolver at his side.

I said to nobody in particular, "Barney could run faster than anybody on the block. There wasn't a cop on the force could catch Barney. He could beat anybody, anything. Only he couldn't run faster than a bullet."

Donahue said from behind me. "He came in waving that gun, threatening to rob us. I struggled with him, and the gun went off."

I said, "You don't have to apologize to me. I'm not a cop. You *did* call the police?"

He shook his head. "I was just going to when you knocked."

I stared at him until he shifted his eyes. I said, "This man's been dead about an hour. What were you and your wife doing—holding a debate?"

"I was so ill I didn't know what to do." He looked sick.

I dialed Police Headquarters, got homicide and told them to get Seger to hotfoot it down to the Donahue's.

When I hung up, Donahue was at his wife's side. She was sobbing into a handkerchief and he was comforting her.

"Where's Marie, the maid?" I said.

Donahue said, "We gave her the day off."

"Why? Because you expected a visitor and didn't want her around?"

"I don't like your tone, Mr. Breen."

"This man is Barney Malin, the same man who stuck up your wife and maid yesterday. If he got your jewels yesterday, what in hell would he be doing back here today?"

All the color drained out of his face. He looked helplessly at his wife.

I said, "I spent all morning visiting pawnshops. Six of them had pieces of jewelry that were listed as stolen. Only these pieces had been hocked weeks before the alleged robbery."

DONAHUE sat down on the couch. His hand shook as he ran it over his thinning hair. "We are not claiming any insurance money. It was a mistake."

"The whole business, the phony heist job, Frank Sanders' murder, Barney's murder—it was all one big mistake. The police will be here soon. I'm making book that they break the whole case a half hour after they hear from the robbery squad about the loot found in the hock shops. They'll figure your wife gave Sanders that jewelry—maybe it was blackmail, maybe a present. But Sanders got the jewelry a piece at a time and hocked them."

Mrs. Donahue lifted her head. She didn't seem surprised in any way,



"Come and get me, dear. I think I'm being followed."

merely thoughtful. She said, "I was foolish, I made a mistake. He threatened to tell my husband unless I gave him money. I did. Then he wanted more money. I—I didn't have enough."

"So you gave him jewelry. Then you got word your husband was coming home. You got frantic. You had to have the jewelry back. Sanders had a brilliant idea. A robbery. That would stop your husband from asking questions. So he got Barney Malin to do the job—for a consideration, of course. He pulled the robbery and you conveniently had your innocent maid on hand for corroboration. Barney took nothing but an empty jewel box. It was your maid who put the finger on Malin by noticing a tattoo mark on his wrist. You should have confided in her, or sent her out before the job."

Donahue took a half-turn around the room. "When I got home last night Mrs. Donahue told me the story. I

went to Sanders' flat. We had a fight. I killed him. Self-defense. A while ago this man Malin came in here. I killed him, too. Again, self-defense. A man has the right to protect his wife and his home."

I said, "Maybe you can, but how about Mrs. Donahue?" I said.

He blinked, said nothing.

"If you had killed Malin you would have called the police in a few minutes," I went on. "Mrs. Donahue killed Malin. Then, not knowing how to dispose of a corpse, she waited here until you came home a short while ago. She told the whole sordid story—for the first time. She told you how she had to kill Sanders when he threatened to tell you unless she shelled out another little fortune. She told how she called the police to go look for the body—your wife has a conscience—and how she killed Malin when he tried to shake her down for getaway money."

"You can't prove that," he cried. "I was the one who did it."

I felt suddenly tired, my eyes had spots before them. "Your plane got in at six-ten yesterday," I told him. "You didn't have time to get the setup and go after Sanders. Besides, your wife had no reason to spill her guts. But now—after you found Malin's body here—she had to have somebody to help her. Ever hear of the paraffin test? Leave it to homicide to find out who fired this gun. They can't miss."

Mrs. Donahue slumped in her chair. She was still there when Seger knocked on the door.

It was three o'clock, exactly twenty hours after the robbery had been reported, when I went up to Barney's flat. Fanny opened the door. I wondered how she'd take his murder.

I looked in her eyes. She could take it, I knew. Time and a guy named Jim Breen could heal any hurt. ● ● ●



DOAK and best girl, Norma Peterson.

Frank Merriwell '49

(Continued from page 29)

kicking superior . . . his running sensational. . . ."

Then Doak came home again, bigger and stronger than ever. S.M.U. fans looked forward with glee to the 1947 season. They weren't disappointed. The Mustangs stampeded everybody in sight, and November found them still unbeaten, heading for the Conference championship.

But—the storybook caught up with Doak again—the next opponent was Texas. And Texas meant Bobby Layne, in his last year, battling Doak for national honors. And Texas, too, was unbeaten.

The 45,000 spectators privileged to see that historic gridiron classic will never forget it. After Page returned the opening kickoff to the Texas 20-yard line, Walker passed to McKissack for a first down on the four-yard line, then handed off to Page for a touchdown. Texas tied the score. Then, two plays later, came the season's big moment. Making one of the greatest leaping catches of his career, Walker hit the ground running and tore toward the coffin corner, where he was

knocked out of bounds on the one-yard line—a gain of 54 yards. McKissack punched over. Texas again scored a touchdown but, when the final whistle blew, the margin of victory lay in the toe of the Mustang's little tailback. S.M.U. won 14-13, on two conversions after touchdowns by Doak Walker.

But the season was not over. Baylor put up a desperate fight in the mud until Doak booted a last-period field goal for a 3-0 lead, then broke away for a 24-yard run with seconds to go, to set up the clincher.

Next on the Frank Merriwell schedule came Texas Christian. That game stopped every heart in the stands. The Frogs jumped to a fast 12-0 advantage, but S.M.U. wouldn't quit. Trying desperately to get away a long pass from his own 39, Walker found himself trapped as white shirts surged in on him. He elected to outrun T.C.U. Feinting, stiff-arming, sprinting, shifting, Doak electrified the crowd with a 61-yard goal-line dash. And, in the third period, that same Number 37 put S.M.U. ahead with another touchdown.

Even a Merriwell Can Err

But that would be too easy for our hero. With two minutes left to play, T.C.U. went 8-yards to pay dirt and a 19-13 edge. With the greatest pressure of his career applied, Doak outdid himself. He grabbed the kick-off, faked a hand-off, shot up the sidelines, broke into the clear and raced to the Frog's 36-yard line. Moments later, he sneaked out, made a jumping snatch of a pass on the 15 and butted to the ten. Twenty seconds remained. S.M.U.'s Gil Johnson rifled a pass to end Sid Halliday and tied the score.

Thirty-two thousand limp, hoarse fans hardly dared breathe as Doak made the try for the game-winning conversion. Did he make it? Well, even Frank Merriwell turned up human on occasions, and those tiny slips made other exploits seem much more fantastic. Final score: S.M.U.—19; T.C.U.—19.

Almost as an anti-climax, Doak's triple-threat dominated S.M.U.'s bitterly waged 13-13 tie with Penn State in the annual Cotton Bowl game on New Year's Day. Walker passed for the first score, ran for the other, intercepted a pass, scooped up a Penn State fumble and repeatedly punted them back to their own goal line.

On to Greater Glory

A mere formality, Doak was named to practically every 1947 All-American team in the country and won the Maxwell Trophy, awarded to the year's outstanding player.

As the 1948 season approached, the Doak Walker boom reached its height. A dozen magazine covers featured pictures of him. Sports pages from coast-to-coast sang his praise. Everyone from the corner grocer to Harry Truman had his name on their lips. The crowd had a winner.

The Mustangs pranced to another Conference championship, with Kyle Rote and sharpshooter Gil Johnson carrying on in Doak Walker's dust.

S.M.U. knocked off Pitt in the opener, 33-14. Doak merely threw one for 14 yards for a first-period score, caught a 30-yard pass and ran another 30 for a touchdown in the second quarter, and returned a punt 75 yards for one more touchdown in the third.

Texas Tech was even easier, 41-6. Then Missouri swung from the floor and dumped S.M.U. 20-14, even though Walker ran for one T.D., caught for another, intercepted twice and made a series of spectacular tackles.

Southern Methodist came back strongly, however, and ran all over Rice and Santa Clara. Arch-rival Texas crumbled before S.M.U.'s furious onslaught, with Doak having himself another field day. He dashed 76 yards for the first score, plunged over for the second, flipped a jump-pass for the third and booted over three conversions. In fact, he did everything but march with the band between halves.